



## **Directives regarding the production and sale of 2025 vintage replacement wines by commercial wineries**

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**Approved By:** Director, Finance (Regulatory and Compliance)

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**Contact:** Director, Finance (Regulatory and Compliance)

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### **1.0 Purpose**

This memorandum sets out the BC Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB)'s directives for commercial wineries regarding the production and sale of 2025 vintage replacement wines ("2025 Replacement Wines") under the LDB's *Agreement Relating to the Direct Sale and Delivery of British Columbia Manufactured Product – Commercial Winery* ("Commercial Winery Agreement") subject to the same terms and conditions applicable to BC Vintners Quality Alliance (BC VQA) Product. This is intended to support B.C. grape wineries to produce a 2025 vintage that fully utilizes available 2025 B.C. grapes while supplementing production with imported inputs, as required. Wineries are expected to leverage this support to maintain a viable industry, protect jobs and retain skilled workers in the wine industry and ancillary sectors, while prioritizing a return to winemaking using 100 per cent B.C. inputs.

Note that, unless otherwise defined in this policy, capitalized terms used herein have the meaning set out in *Appendix B – Definitions* of the Commercial Winery Agreement.

### **2.0 Scope**

This memorandum applies to all commercial wineries in B.C. producing 2025 Replacement Wines.

### **3.0 Directives**

#### **3.1 2025 Replacement Wines and authorized inputs**

2025 Replacement Wines are a Product of a commercial winery produced with authorized inputs. Authorized inputs are:

- fully derived from the 2025 harvest, with no origin restrictions on inputs;
- purchased on or before March 31, 2026; and
- in one of the following states when coming into the possession or control of the commercial winery:
  - grapes;
  - grape juice (which, for red wines, includes must);
  - unfinished white wine after first fermentation; or
  - unfinished red wine after second (i.e. malolactic) fermentation.



In accordance with this directive, commercial wineries may conduct sales and deliveries of 2025 Replacement Wines under their Commercial Winery Agreement subject to the same terms and conditions applicable to BC VQA Product.

### **3.2 Eligibility requirements**

To be eligible to produce and sell 2025 Replacement Wines, commercial wineries must have sold BC VQA Product between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2024.

### **3.3 Packaging, registration, and labelling requirements**

Consistent with existing BC VQA packaging requirements, 2025 Replacement Wines developed by commercial wineries to replace BC VQA Product must be packaged in bottles only, sized only as authorized under the federal *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*, and are not permitted to be packaged in alternative formats such as kegs and bag-in-box. Compliance with packaging requirements will be verified by LDB Wholesale Operations during product registration.

Registration and labelling of 2025 Replacement Wines must comply with the requirements set out in the Commercial Winery Agreement and the LDB Wholesale Product Registration Policy for Liquor. **In addition to these requirements, 2025 Replacement Wines must have a clear declaration of input origins on the front panel label; labels will be reviewed for compliance by the LDB and must be approved prior to printing.** Wineries that print labels prior to LDB approval will be responsible for the cost of re-printing if their labels are found to be non-compliant. As in 2024, any regulated appellation of origin claims made on labels must also meet the requirements of the jurisdiction from which the inputs were imported.

**2025 Replacement Wines replacing a comparable 2024 Replacement Wine (e.g. same varietal(s), same region of origin) may be updated with the new vintage via a product change and retain the same SKU number. For vintage changes, wineries must submit labels for review and approval to [ldbvendorhelp@bcldb.com](mailto:ldbvendorhelp@bcldb.com) prior to printing. The LDB requires a minimum of three business days to approve label submissions, and this must be completed in advance of submitting the product change form. When wineries have depleted inventory of the 2024 wine and are ready to begin sales of the 2025 wine, update the vintage by submitting the product change form to [ldbprdata@bcldb.com](mailto:ldbprdata@bcldb.com).**

**New or materially different (e.g., different varietal(s), different region of origin) 2025 Replacement Wines must be registered as a net new product and be issued a new SKU number; labels will be reviewed for compliance at the time of registration.**

### **3.4 Reporting, remittance, record-keeping, and auditing requirements**

Eligible commercial wineries must continue to provide Sales Reports to the LDB for all Product of their Licensed Establishment (including 2024 and 2025 Replacement Wines) in the usual course (i.e. weekly), and to promptly pay the LDB applicable mark-up owing, container deposits, recycling fees, and applicable taxes based on those reported sales.



Commercial wineries producing 2025 Replacement Wines must maintain Records sufficient to confirm that they meet the Eligibility Requirements set out in this memorandum and be able to fully account for all inputs used in their production of 2025 Replacement Wines. Such Records may be subject to audit by the LDB, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Commercial Winery Agreement.

Records relating to 2025 Replacement Wines must clearly indicate:

- the state of the input (i.e. grapes, grape juice, must, or unfinished white wine after first fermentation or unfinished red wine after malolactic fermentation) upon purchase and, for unfinished wine, the state of fermentation at the time of purchase;
- that inputs are derived from the 2025 harvest; and
- the purchase date, which must be on or before March 31, 2026.

LDB Regulatory will conduct regular monitoring to identify when wineries producing and selling 2024 Replacement Wine and 2025 Replacement Wine have reached their annual support cap for that fiscal year. When a commercial winery's combined total of mark-up concessions and rebates for 2024 Replacement Wine, 2025 Replacement Wine, and BC VQA Product reaches 60 per cent of the winery's support cap, LDB Regulatory will notify the winery in writing. When that combined total reaches 100 per cent of the winery's annual support cap, the winery will no longer receive any mark-up concessions or rebates on sales of 2024 Replacement Wine, 2025 Replacement Wine, or BC VQA Product for the remainder of that fiscal year. Any concessions provided once the annual support cap has been reached will be charged back to the winery. The support cap resets each year on April 1 until the 2025 Replacement Wine support period concludes on March 31, 2029 (see section 3.7).

### **3.5 Non-compliance**

If the LDB determines that a commercial winery is purporting to produce and sell 2025 Replacement Wines and is non-compliant with the requirements of this memorandum, the commercial winery's eligibility to produce and sell 2025 Replacement Wines may be terminated effective as of the date of the non-compliance. The commercial winery will be responsible for paying to the LDB mark-up owing for sales of 2025 Replacement Wines made after the date of non-compliance. The commercial winery may also be subject to other consequences of non-compliance as detailed in the Commercial Winery Agreement.

### **3.6 Opting in and out of 2025 Replacement Wine supports**

Annual support cap letters issued to wineries by the LDB in 2024 also apply to 2025 Replacement Wine production and related supports. Support caps are based on an average of mark-up concessions and rebates received by each winery between fiscal years 2019/20 and 2023/24. For commercial wineries, the annual support cap includes mark-up concessions and rebates received on all sales of BC VQA, 2024 Replacement Wines and 2025 Replacement Wines. Sales of 2025 Replacement Wines are eligible for inclusion in annual support caps starting April 1, 2026.

2025 Replacement Wines must be sold between April 1, 2026 and March 31, 2029 to be eligible for mark-up concessions and rebates. Any 2025 Replacement Wine sold before April



1, 2026 will be subject to mark-up but will not count towards the annual support cap.

Wineries that no longer wish to be subject to the annual support cap and do not intend to produce or sell anymore Replacement Wine must contact LDB Regulatory on or before March 31, 2026 at [regemail@bcldb.com](mailto:regemail@bcldb.com) to request that they be opted out. Opt-outs will take effect at the end of the fiscal year (March 31) in which the request is made.

Wineries that opted out of 2024 Replacement Wine supports can opt-in to 2025 Replacement Wine supports. However, wineries cannot opt back into 2025 Replacement Wine supports once opted out.

### **3.7 Conclusion of 2025 Replacement Wine supports**

The temporary requirements permitting commercial wineries to produce and sell 2025 Replacement Wines as Products of their Licensed Establishment will terminate on March 31, 2029<sup>1</sup>. As of April 1, 2029, or upon opting out of 2025 Replacement Wine supports, commercial wineries must return to full compliance with the terms and conditions of their original Commercial Winery Agreement. Any 2025 Replacement Wines sold after April 1, 2029, or when the commercial winery has reached its annual support cap in any fiscal year between April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2029, will be subject to full mark-up.

### **4.0 References**

- [Agreement relating to the direct sale and delivery of British Columbia manufactured product – Commercial Winery](#)
- [Agreement relating to the direct sale and delivery of British Columbia manufactured product – Land Based Winery](#)
- [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act](#)
- [LDB Wholesale Product Registration Policy for Liquor](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The support period for 2024 Replacement Wines still concludes March 31, 2028.